

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5178

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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SUBJ: POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AND UNION PROPOSALS

REF: ROME 0603 (NOTAL), 75 ROME 16856 (NOTAL), 75 ROME 11565

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AS REPORTED IN ROME 0603 ITALY'S THREE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS MEETING JOINTLY, CGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU), AGREED ON JAN. 13 TO PROPOSE A NUMBER OF POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL LEADERS IN ELABORATING A PLAN TO COPE WITH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS AND PROTECT EMPLOYMENT. THE UNION PLATFORM REAFFIRMS MOST OF THE PROPOSALS THEY HAVE BEEN MAKING FOR SOME TIME WITH SOME NEW THEMES ADDED. THE NEW IDEAS INVOLVE UNION SUPPORT FOR THE CONCEPT OF LABOR MOBILITY AND FOR AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH. IN TERMS OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL CIRISIS IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE UNIONS DID NOT RPT NOT REJECT TOTALLY THE SO CALLED LA MALFA PLAN, WHICH HAS BEEN SEVERELY CRITICIZED BY THE PSI. THE UNIONS HAVE AS A RESULT OF THEIR INITIATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE STANCE BECOME A KEY FACTOR IN CURRENT CONSULTATIONS AIMED AT RESOLVING THE POLITICAL

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CRISIS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FOLLOWING IS A SYNTHESIS OF THE UNION PLATFORM:

- A. IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE TO THE MOST HARD HIT INDUSTRIAL FIRMS IN ORDER TO PREVENT FURTHER LAYOFFS;
- B. SUSPENSION OF LAYOFFS AND FIRINGS WITH RECOURSE BEING MADE TO THE WAGE SUPPLEMENT FUND;
- C. SPEEDY ELABORATION OF A PROGRAM TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG ITALIANS ENTERING THE LABOR FORCE WHO CONSTITUTE AN INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF THE COUNTRY'S UNEMPLOYED;
- D. COORDINATION WITH THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN DIRECTING ECONOMIC POLICY;
- E. REORGANIZATION OF STATE OWNED ENTERPRISES;
- F. RE-EXAMINATION OF GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS FOR AIDING INDUSTRY AND THE SOUTHERN REGIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN APPROVED IN PARLIAMENT AND OF OTHER, NOT YET APPROVED, PROPOSALS FOR AIDING AGRICULTURE, URBAN REFORM AND PUBLIC HOUSING;
- G. IMPLEMENTATION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHERN REGIONS ESPECIALLY THROUGH INCREASED EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS;
- H. ELABORATION OF MEASURES TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY IN AGRICULTURE AND TO PROTECT EMPLOYMENT IN THIS SECTOR;
- I. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW REGULATIONS REGARDING URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND OF PROGRAMS FOR AIDING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY THROUGH PUBLIC HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS;
- J. FULL UTILIZATION OF FINANCIAL CREDITS WHICH HAVE BEEN PUT AT THE DISPOSITION OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS;
- K. IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW SELECTIVE PRICE CONTROL POLICY WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON LIMITING INCREASES IN CHARGES FOR ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES;
- L. IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO CORRECT "THE MOST NOTORIOUS FORMS OF TAX EVASION."

3. IN COMMENTING ON THE SUBJECT UNION PLATFORM CISL SECRETARY GENERAL BRUNO STORTI WARNED THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP THAT "ANY ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE CURRENT CRISIS WITHOUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE IDEAS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS OF THE WORKERS WOULD BE DANGEROUS." UIL SECRETARY GENERAL RAFFAELE VANNI CAUTIONED THAT THE UNIONS ARE PARTICULARLY OPPOSED TO ANY ATTEMPT TO REVISE THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY ON A REDUCED PRODUCTIVE BASE, THAT IS, THROUGH A DECREASE IN OVERALL EMPLOYMENT. VANNI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUGGESTED THAT VIGOROUS EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO INCREASE THE MOBILITY OF THE WORK FORCE SO THAT THOSE LAID OFF FROM INDUSTRIES FACING CONTRACTING MARKETS COULD BE RE-EMPLOYED IN OTHER SECTORS. CGIL SECRETARY GENERAL LUCIANO LAMA PROPOSED THAT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH. HE SAID "IT IS NECESSARY TO ADOPT EMERGENCY MEASURES FOR EMPLOYING YOUNG PEOPLE EVEN TEMPORARILY IN ACTIVITIES SUCH AS URBAN RENEWAL, PUBLIC WORKS, AND IN SCHOOLS AS TEACHING AUXILIARIES

OR TO EDUCATE ILLITERATE ADULTS. THEIR COMPENSATION SHOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO A NORMAL SALARY WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WAGES WOULD IN THESE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES NOT BE SUBJECT TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS."

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE UNIONS DID NOT EXPLICITLY CONDEMN THE PSI FOR REJECTING THE LA MALFA PLAN, THEY WERE CAREFUL TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THEIR PLATFORM CONSTITUTES THE BASIS FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE RE-EXAMINATION OF THE LATTER. DC SECRETARY GENERAL BENIGNO ZACCAGNINI IN AN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE INVITED THE THREE LEADERS OF THE CCU FOR CONSULTATIONS ON JANUARY 15 BEFORE HIS MEETING WITH MORO. SIMILARLY, THE LATTER, HAS ALSO REQUESTED A MEETING WITH THE UNION LEADERS BEFORE BEGINNING HIS POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AIMED AT FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT. IN THE MEANTIME, THE SOCIALISTS HAVE REVISED THEIR OWN ECONOMIC PROPOSALS TO BRING THEM INTO CLOSER ACCORD WITH THE UNION PLATFORM. VOLPE

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